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Item 1 of the provisional agenda
Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters

Provisional agenda

1. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters.
2. Adoption of the multi-year programme of work.
3. Development of a plan of action for the implementation of Intergovernmental Panel on Forests/Intergovernmental Forum on Forests proposals for action, which will address financial provisions.
4. Initiation of the work of the United Nations Forum on Forests with the Collaborative Partnership on Forests.
5. Date and venue for the second session of the Forum in 2002.
6. Provisional agenda for the second session of the Forum.
7. Adoption of the report of the Forum on its first session.

Annotations

1. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters

In accordance with rule 7 of the rules of procedure of the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council (see E/5975/Rev.1), the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) shall, at the beginning of the session, after the election of its officers, adopt the agenda for that session on the basis of the provisional agenda. The officers of the first session of UNFF were elected during the organizational session of UNFF held on 12 February 2001 (see E/2001/42 (Part I)-E/CN.18/2001/3 (Part I), para. 11).

2. Adoption of the multi-year programme of work

At its resumed substantive session of 2000, the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 2000/35, paragraph 4 (g), decided that UNFF would work on the basis of a multi-year programme of work, drawing on the elements reflected in the Rio

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Declaration on Environment and Development, the Non-legally Binding Authoritative Statement of Principles for a Global Consensus on the Management, Conservation and Sustainable Development of All Types of Forests (Forest Principles), chapter 11 of Agenda 21 and the Intergovernmental Panel On Forests/Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IPF/IFF) proposals for action. In paragraph 7 (b) (i) of the same resolution, the Council also decided that UNFF would adopt its multi-year programme of work at its first substantive session in 2001.

Documentation

Report of the Secretary-General on the multi-year programme of work of the United Nations Forum on Forests (E/CN.18/2001/5)

3. **Development of a plan of action for the implementation of Intergovernmental Panel on Forests/Intergovernmental Forum on Forests proposals for action, which will address financial provisions**

In paragraph 7 (b) (ii) of its resolution 2000/35, the Economic and Social Council decided that UNFF should, at its first substantive session in 2001, develop a plan of action for the implementation of IPF/IFF proposals for action, which would address financial provisions.

Documentation

Report of the Secretary-General entitled "Towards the development of the United Nations Forum on Forests plan of action" (E/CN.18/2001/6)

4. **Initiation of the work of the United Nations Forum on Forests with the Collaborative Partnership on Forests**

In paragraph 3 (b) of resolution 2000/35, the Economic and Social Council decided, in order to achieve the objective and to carry out the functions outlined in paragraphs 1 and 2 of that resolution, to invite the executive heads of relevant organizations of the United Nations system and heads of other relevant international and regional organizations, institutions and instruments to form a Collaborative Partnership on Forests to support the work of the Forum and to enhance cooperation and coordination among participants, and to call upon their governing bodies and their heads to support the activities of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests to achieve the goals of the Forum.

In paragraph 8 of the same resolution, the Economic and Social Council recommended that the Collaborative Partnership on Forests[1] build on a high-level, informal group, such as the Inter-Agency Task Force on Forests, which would receive guidance from the Forum; facilitate and promote coordinated and

[1] On 4 and 5 April 2001, the Collaborative Partnership on Forests was established by the members of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Forests; it is initially composed of the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Center for International Forestry Research, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the International Tropical Timber Organization, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Environment Programme and the World Bank, and is chaired by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

cooperative action, including joint programming and submissions of coordinated proposals to their respective governing bodies; and facilitate donor coordination. The Council also recommended that the Partnership submit coordinated inputs and progress reports to the Forum, operate in an open, transparent and flexible manner, and undertake periodic reviews of its effectiveness.

Documentation

Note by the Secretariat on the initiation of the work of the United Nations Forum on Forests with the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (E/CN.18/2001/7)

5. **Date and venue for the second session of the Forum in 2002**

At its organizational session, UNFF recommended to the Economic and Social Council the adoption of a draft decision in which the Council would decide that the first and fifth substantive sessions of the Forum would be held in New York, that two of the three intervening sessions would be held in Geneva and one in San José, Costa Rica, and that any ministerial segment to be convened during the intervening period would be convened during the session held in San José (see E/2001/42 (Part I)-E/CN.18/2001/3 (Part I), chap. I, sect. A).

6. **Provisional agenda for the second session of the Forum**

7. **Adoption of the report of the Forum on its first session**

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United Nations Forum on Forests
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New York, 11-22 June 2001
Item 2 of the provisional agenda*
Adoption of the multi-year programme of work

Multi-year programme of work of the United Nations Forum on Forests

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

In accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/35, the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) will adopt a multi-year programme of work at its first session. The present report is prepared to facilitate the deliberations and adoption of the programme of work. Preparation of this report has benefited from the eight-country initiative entitled "Shaping the Programme of Work for the United Nations Forum on Forests"; and the informal consultations on the multi-year programme of work held in conjunction with UNFF organizational session in February 2001, as well as inputs from members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF).

This report briefly describes the mandate for the multi-year programme of work, as outlined in Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/35. The basic framework of the multi-year programme of work and its content have been designed to achieve the main objective of UNFF which is to promote the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests and to strengthen long-term political commitment to that end; and it has taken into full account the principal functions of UNFF. In formulating its multi-year programme of work, UNFF may wish to consider the content, instruments, outcomes and regional involvement outlined in this report. The report also proposes a schedule for the next five years as a basis for the multi-year programme of work. The proposed framework for the multi-year programme of work is based on the principal functions of UNFF, as decided in the above-mentioned Council resolution, as well as on thematic focuses for each session.

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Introduction

1. The present report is intended to facilitate the deliberations of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) at its first session, to be held in June 2001, on item 2 of its provisional agenda entitled "Adoption of the multi-year programme of work". An exchange of views on the multi-year programme of work took place during informal consultations of UNFF held from 13 to 16 February 2001 in conjunction with the organizational session, on 12 February 2001. The Secretariat prepared two information notes to facilitate these informal consultations.[1] This report also benefited from the eight-country initiative,[2] which provided participants with a valuable opportunity for an initial exchange of views on the shaping of UNFF's programme of work for the next five years. Furthermore, the report has benefited from inputs from members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF). The report has taken into account the work programmes and agendas of functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council, and governing bodies of CPF members as well as major forest-related events, including international conferences and meetings.

2. At its first session, UNFF is expected to adopt its multi-year programme of work, which would include a description and scheduling of the tasks that UNFF will undertake for the period 2001-2005.

Mandate

3. In Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/35, which established UNFF, the Council stated, in paragraph 4 (g) that UNFF would work on the basis of a multi-year programme of work, drawing on the elements reflected in the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development,[3] the Non-legally Binding Authoritative Statement of Principles for a Global Consensus on the Management, Conservation and Sustainable Development of All Types of Forests (Forest Principles)[4], chapter 11 of Agenda 21[5] and the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests/Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IPF/IFF) proposals for action. In paragraph 7 (b) (i) of the same resolution, the Council also stated that at its first substantive session in 2001 UNFF would adopt the multi-year programme of work.

4. The basic framework of the multi-year programme of work should be designed to achieve the main objective of UNFF. It should also take into full account the principal functions of UNFF. Furthermore, it should address specific actions and employ the set of means or instruments outlined in Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/35.

5. As stated in paragraph 1 of Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/35, the main objective of UNFF is to promote the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests and to strengthen long-term political commitment to that end.

6. In paragraph 2 of resolution 2000/35, the Economic and Social Council decided that, in order to achieve its main objective, UNFF would perform the following principal functions:

(a) Facilitate and promote implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action as well as other actions (para. 2 (a));

(b) Provide a forum for continued policy development and dialogue to foster a common understanding of sustainable forest management and to address forest issues and emerging areas of priority concern (para. 2 (b));

(c) Enhance cooperation as well as policy and programme coordination on forest-related issues among relevant international and regional organizations, institutions and instruments (para. 2 (c));

(d) Foster international and cross-sectoral cooperation (para. 2 (d));

(e) Monitor and assess progress, through reporting (para. 2 (e));

(f) Strengthen political commitment to the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests (para. 2 (f)).

7. In the same resolution, the Economic and Social Council also decided that UNFF would undertake the following specific actions (key actions mentioned are summarized and listed in the order in which they appear in Council resolution 2000/35):

(a) Consider, with a view to recommending to the Council and through it to the General Assembly, the parameters of a mandate for developing a legal framework on all types of forests (para. 3 (c) (i));

(b) Take steps to devise approaches towards appropriate financial and technology transfer support (para. 3 (c) (ii));

(c) Provide guidance to the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF) (para. 8);

(d) Review the effectiveness of the international arrangement on forests in five years (para. 17).

8. Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/35 also identified the following instruments that UNFF might employ to perform its functions and accomplish its work:

(a) Forum for continued policy development and dialogue (para. 2 (b));

(b) Holding of high-level ministerial segments (para. 4 (j));

(c) Holding of one-day policy dialogues between ministers and heads of organizations (para. 4 (j));

(d) Holding of multi-stakeholder dialogues (para. 4 (j));

(e) Convening of ad hoc expert groups for scientific and technical advice and encouragement of country-sponsored initiatives, such as international expert meetings (para. 4 (k));

(f) Development of a plan of action.

I. Preparations for the first session of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF)

A. The eight-country initiative

9. The country-led initiative entitled "Shaping the Programme of Work for the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF)" was co-sponsored by eight countries, namely, Australia, Brazil, Canada, France, Germany, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Malaysia and Nigeria. The consultation provided 95 participants, from 33 countries as well as international organizations and major groups, with a valuable opportunity to exchange views as well as to elaborate ideas on the concept and basic elements of the future programme of work of UNFF. The expert consultation focused on the functions of UNFF as outlined in Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/35, paragraph 2 (a) to (f). The discussions included the relationship between the main activities in the multi-year programme of work and the specific functions as well as the instruments to be employed by UNFF.

B. Informal consultations

10. At the informal consultations held in conjunction with the organizational session in February 2001, government representatives and other participants had the opportunity to engage in an initial exchange of views on the nature and scope of UNFF's multi-year programme of work. The participants in the informal consultations emphasized that UNFF's multi-year programme of work would be aimed primarily towards the implementation of the previously agreed IPF/IFF proposals for action.

II. General considerations for the multi-year programme of work

A. Content

General

11. The multi-year programme of work is seen as a translation of the objectives, principal functions and specific actions outlined in Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/35 into concrete tasks to be undertaken by UNFF for the period 2001-2005. The multi-year programme of work would build upon, not replicate, the work of IPF/IFF and focus on a number of implementation-oriented tasks, where further progress could be achieved. The UNFF's policy development work would focus on areas where it could add value to implementation, and address areas of priority concern as well as promote synergies with the work of other existing forest-related bodies. In order to perform its coordination function, it would be important for UNFF to take into account the multi-year programme of work of other relevant functional commissions of the Council, governing bodies of CPF members, conferences of the parties to instruments, and forthcoming major events to which UNFF could contribute and on which it could exert an influence, and vice versa.

12. With implementation of IPF/IFF proposals for action as its driving force, UNFF would benefit by building on past experiences, insights, successes and challenges encountered by all countries, both developed and developing, in their efforts to achieve

sustainable forest management. UNFF could also focus on how sustainable forest management might contribute towards meeting broader national economic, social, environmental, and human development goals.

General thematic focus of UNFF sessions

13. It is stated in Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/35 (para. 4 (g)) that the multi-year programme of work of UNFF should draw upon the elements reflected in the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, the Forest Principles, chapter 11 of Agenda 21 and the IPF/IFF proposals for action. During the informal consultations in February 2001, several suggestions were made on themes for UNFF's multi-year programme of work. The suggestions for thematic focuses of the multi-year programme of work reflected broadly the following: the three pillars of sustainable forest management; sustainable development; and the broad criteria for sustainable forest management, used in regional processes on criteria and indicators.

14. The thematic focuses suggested in this report were formulated by taking into consideration the above objectives and the comments made by the participants at the informal consultations on information note No. 1,[6] as well as other proposals put forward by participants. It is suggested that each UNFF session have a specific thematic focus, in addition to addressing the plan of action, monitoring of progress and cross-sectoral issues. The following themes are proposed:

- **Second session of UNFF: Forest conservation, protected areas and environmental services**

Examples of potential topics under this theme include:

(a) Forest health; forest fires; invasive species; and fragmentation;

(b) Fragile, critical, unique and representative forest ecosystems; protected areas; protection of watershed and soil; site rehabilitation of degraded forests; and specific needs of low forest cover countries;

(c) Biodiversity; traditional forest-related knowledge; and carbon sequestration.

- **Third session of UNFF: International trade and investment in support of sustainable forest management**

Examples of potential topics under this theme include:

(a) Market access, barriers; certification; substitution; illegal logging; and good governance;

(b) Forest products and processing; low-impact harvesting; non-wood products and services; recycling; role of plantations; and competitiveness;

(c) Supply and demand; production and consumption; valuation of forest products and services; internalizing externalities; valuation in national accounting.

- **Fourth session of UNFF: Forests and human needs**

Examples of potential topics under this theme include:

(a) Role of forests in the promotion of sustainable livelihoods, economic growth and poverty reduction; and integration of local communities, public participation and gender aspects in sustainable forest management;

(b) Land tenure; community forestry; agroforestry; and the local processing industry;

(c) Fuelwood for household energy needs; and wood and biomass from trees for power and heat generation.

- **Fifth session of UNFF: Consideration of progress made and future action needed**

B. Instruments

15. While UNFF itself is not a body with an operational mandate, it has an array of instruments with which to accomplish its tasks. Providing an international forum for continued policy development and dialogue on forest issues is itself a core instrument of UNFF. However, the plan of action would be the principal instrument of UNFF for promoting and

facilitating the implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action.

16. The high-level ministerial segment, mentioned in paragraph 8 above, is potentially among the most influential political instruments of UNFF. The ministerial segment would provide an opportunity to seek political guidance and commitment as well as to facilitate the implementation of UNFF plan of action. The dialogue with heads of international organizations, including the CPF member organizations, would be another effective instrument through which to seek inter-agency coordination and support for the implementation of the UNFF plan of action.

17. The multi-stakeholder dialogue would be an instrument with which to engage and receive inputs to enrich the implementation-oriented forest debate. The most relevant stakeholders for a particular session's thematic focus could actively contribute towards the preparation of dialogue and the forwarding of recommendations to the intergovernmental deliberations.

18. It would also be desirable to find an appropriate mechanism whereby national and regional experiences and assessments could feed directly into UNFF's work at each session through an open discussion. This could be achieved by national or regional presentations on particular themes to be addressed. These should be focused on implementation and followed by discussions at the beginning of each session.

19. UNFF may also convene expert groups and invite CPF to undertake preparatory work for its deliberations. In addition, it would be useful for UNFF to take advantage of ongoing activities and programmes of international and regional organizations, institutions, instruments and processes; expert contributions and analytical work of organizations participating in CPF, and in-kind contributions from countries, international organizations and major groups in the form of studies and so forth. Furthermore, following the practice during the IPF/IFF process, countries and other interested parties could organize meetings of experts to advance specific areas of UNFF's multi-year programme of work.

C. Expected outcomes

20. UNFF may wish to decide on the form of the result of its work (for example, action programmes; reports; studies; policy guidance; guidelines; criteria and principles; and recommendations to the Economic and Social Council, the General Assembly, CPF and other actors). The report of each session of UNFF would be a compilation of these different outcomes. It would also be important for UNFF to decide on the types of outcomes of the high-level ministerial segments, which could be in the form, for example, of declarations, statements aimed at other policy or political forums or political guidance on specific aspects of UNFF's multi-year programme of work. With careful planning and successful involvement of ministers, the outcome of the ministerial segments could be among the most critical and influential aspect of UNFF.

D. Regional involvement

21. The need to enhance regional involvement in the work of UNFF has been emphasized repeatedly during forest policy deliberations. Regional bodies, groups and processes could be involved in implementing UNFF plan of action and in monitoring progress. In some cases, regional experiences and cooperation of efforts to address forest-related issues have proved to be very successful and these could be showcased during UNFF sessions. Examples of regional processes and organizations include, the Pan-European forest process,[7] the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (formerly the South Pacific Commission), the Amazon Cooperation Treaty, the Central American Convention on Forests, the African Timber Organization, the Committee on Forests and Woodlands (COFAW) of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN), and the regional criteria and indicators processes, as well as the regional forestry commissions of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). These regional processes and organizations could build effective partnerships among countries and organizations concerned with achieving UNFF objectives. Holding regular UNFF sessions in different regions, and organizing regional workshops, as well as encouraging presentations on regional perspectives and experiences during UNFF sessions, are other ways of increasing awareness and engagement of various regions and actors.

III. Proposed multi-year programme of work

22. In formulating its multi-year programme of work for the period 2001-2005, UNFF may wish to consider the following framework and content thereof as based on the objective, principal functions, and specific actions as well as the instruments outlined in Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/35. The proposed multi-year programme of work is differentiated by function-based categories, and each category is divided into programme elements and specific tasks.

A. Facilitate and promote implementation

23. The facilitation and promotion of the implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action are considered central to the multi-year programme of work of UNFF.

1. Development of the plan of action

24. It is proposed that the main tool of UNFF with which to facilitate implementation, the UNFF plan of action, be composed of eight programmatic components, four cross-cutting issues and one monitoring function as presented in the report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.18/2001/6) entitled "Towards the development of the UNFF plan of action". This plan of action would aim to address concrete targets and timetables for the five-year period of UNFF as well as financial provisions.

2. Lessons learned

25. At the beginning of each session of UNFF, it would be useful to consider national and regional presentations on assessments of implementation relevant to the particular session's theme. These presentations could be followed by an exchange of ideas and experiences among participants, as a way to enrich the UNFF deliberations. These presentations could showcase successes, and focus specifically on insights and challenges in implementation and then forward recommendations to UNFF for policy deliberations and action.

3. Multi-stakeholder dialogues

26. The formats for the multi-stakeholder dialogues would be developed in consultation with relevant major groups in order to seek their effective contributions to the UNFF process. It is suggested that these dialogues be held at the beginning of each session and address the themes of the session so that any observations and recommendations emanating from these dialogues could be effectively considered by UNFF.

B. Policy development and dialogue to foster a common understanding on forest policy issues and sustainable forest management

27. In its deliberations and dialogue on a particular sessions theme, UNFF may wish to allow for in-depth discussion aimed directly at facilitating implementation, promoting a common understanding of sustainable forest management and addressing emerging areas of priority concern.

1. Implementation oriented policy development and dialogue

28. In addition to its work on facilitating, promoting and monitoring implementation, UNFF may wish to address the theme of a particular session linking it to its various functions.

2. Emerging areas of priority concern

29. Emerging areas of priority concern depend on current developments as well as evolving circumstances, and thus cannot be identified too far in advance. Therefore, at each of its sessions, UNFF may wish to identify one emerging area of priority concern for consideration at the following session, preferably relevant to the overall theme.

30. Forest fires, as an example of an area of emerging concern, are proposed for consideration at the second session of UNFF.[8]

C. Enhance cooperation and coordination of policies and programmes

1. Coordination and cooperation among international organizations, institutions and instruments on forest-related policies and programmes

31. UNFF has been established to serve as the focal point for addressing forest-related issues in a

comprehensive, cohesive and coordinated manner. In addition to addressing this programme element as part of a particular session's thematic focus, UNFF would need to prepare input to, and consider contributions from other organizations, institutions and instruments. This will require keeping abreast of the programmes of work of other bodies and major events in order to harmonize UNFF deliberations with others.[9] The UNFF secretariat will keep an updated calendar of events and their agendas and suggest timely contributions that UNFF could make to other bodies. UNFF may wish to decide on the types of contributions it would make to other forums as well as invite inputs from others for its sessions. It should be noted that the Economic and Social Council has specifically called for coordination among its bodies in order to create increased synergies as well as follow-up on Council decisions in this regard.[10]

32. It is suggested that, at its second session, UNFF prepare an input to the World Summit on Sustainable Development, to be held in Johannesburg, South Africa, in mid-2002, as well as to the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity,[11] which will be held shortly after the second session of UNFF.

2. UNFF interface with the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF)

33. The work of UNFF with CPF will be initiated at the first session of UNFF (see the separate Note prepared by the Secretariat on CPF).[12] In the course of its work over five years, UNFF may wish to invite CPF to support specific tasks related to the themes and other aspects of UNFF's work, some of which are suggested in the note by the Secretariat. CPF will, for example, be well positioned to support UNFF in the development and implementation of the plan of action as well as in the development of a system of monitoring, assessment and reporting including frequency of reporting and basic parameters for assessing progress. It will also be important to receive proposals from CPF on streamlining national reporting formats required by various forest-related international organizations and instruments, taking also into account the streamlining work on reporting in other relevant forums.[13] UNFF may wish to focus on advancing the common understanding and use of those key concepts, definitions and terms that could benefit greatly the implementation at a practical level, as well as the monitoring of progress.

34. For the preparations for its second and third sessions, UNFF may wish to invite CPF to contribute to and assist in the following tasks of UNFF:[14]

- Developing the plan of action (related to para. 24 above);
- Facilitating the implementation of the plan of action (related to para. 24 above);
- Streamlining existing forest-related reporting formats and requirements (related to paras. 31-32 above and 39-42 below);
- Developing a system for monitoring, assessment and reporting on progress[15] (related to paras. 39-42 below);
- Developing a common understanding of key forest concepts, terms and definitions used at national, regional and international levels (related to paras. 27-30 above and paras. 39-42 below).

D. Foster international and cross-sectoral cooperation

35. Under this category, UNFF may wish to address cross-sectoral as well as overarching issues within its mandate and, for each of these issues, to focus on fostering possible partnerships to enhance action. At each of its sessions, UNFF may consider addressing one programme element relating to international cooperation and cross-sectoral cooperation, for example:

1. Financing in support of sustainable forest management, including the consideration mandated in paragraph 3 (c) (ii) of Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/35, and approaches as well as coordination among donors.

2. Forest and cross-sectoral policy harmonization and cooperation at the national, regional and global levels.

3. Forest research and technology transfer in support of sustainable forest management.

36. The specific action to devise approaches towards appropriate financial and technology transfer support, as mandated in paragraph 3 (c) (ii) of Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/35, could be addressed

by UNFF under this category. In paragraph 4 (k) of the resolution, it is noted that UNFF could make use of expert groups and country- and organization-led initiatives to prepare its deliberations on these issues. In view of the recent holding of the "International Workshop of Experts on Financing Sustainable Forest Management", 22-25 January 2001, in Oslo, Norway, UNFF, at its second session, may wish to deliberate programme element 1 above in order to have as updated a contribution as possible. This timing is consistent with paragraph 9 of Council resolution 2000/35 where it is stated that the issues noted in paragraph 3 (c) (ii) should be dealt with as a matter of priority.

37. Under programme element 2, UNFF may wish to consider policy harmonization to address the interface between the forest sector and other sectors, for example, how agriculture and energy policies influence sustainable forest management and overall sustainable human development.

38. Cooperation and coordination on scientific research, transfer of improved technologies for sustainable forest management, and approaches for capacity-building (for example, institutional management) would require the further attention of the international community. UNFF may wish to consider those issues under programme element 3.

E. Monitoring, assessment and reporting

39. Monitoring, assessment and reporting constitute one of the key functions of UNFF. This is a central category in the multi-year programme of work and relates to all other aspects of the work of UNFF (see, in particular, paras. 33-34 above and 46 below).[16]

40. UNFF's tasks on monitoring, assessment and reporting would need to encompass the following three aspects in order to provide a basis for the consideration of future action needed:

1. Progress in implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action:

(a) UNFF may wish to develop and adopt a simple voluntary reporting system on the implementation of IPF/IFF proposals for action, taking into consideration the other voluntary reporting systems;

(b) Assessment would be undertaken against the targets set in the plan of action.

2. Progress towards sustainable forest management and trends in the state of forests:

(a) UNFF would use existing information and assessment to review progress towards sustainable forest management and the state of forests;[17]

(b) Criteria and indicators on sustainable forest management provide a framework for monitoring, assessing and reporting on national trends in the state of forests and progress towards sustainable forest management.

3. Review of the effectiveness of the international arrangement on forests, including addressing the institutional framework of UNFF (proposed as a separate category; see para. 46).

41. UNFF may wish to invite CPF to assist in developing an efficient UNFF system on monitoring, assessment and reporting. Furthermore, UNFF may wish to establish a small informal group of experts on this topic.

42. UNFF may further wish to consider the following main programme elements under this category:

1. Structure, frequency and mechanism for monitoring, assessment and reporting.

2. Criteria and indicators of sustainable forest management.

3. Consideration of progress made and future actions needed (also related to sect. G below on the five-year review).

F. Strengthen political commitment

43. UNFF may wish to secure stronger political commitment by including the following three programme elements in its multi-year programme of work.

1. High-level ministerial segments

44. The high-level ministerial segments would aim to provide strong political support and guidance to UNFF. These high-level segments would provide an opportunity for ministers to identify priorities as well as to review progress. It would be desirable to link the

agendas for these ministerial segments with the principal theme of the session. The first ministerial segment of UNFF is proposed to be held at the second session, to guide and approve the plan of action and to make political commitments towards its implementation as well as to provide input to the World Summit on Sustainable Development. The second ministerial segment is proposed to be held at the fifth session, to review progress and guide future action.

2. Dialogue with heads of organizations

45. In order to strengthen CPF and to promote coordinated action, it would be necessary to hold the dialogue with heads of international organizations during the high-level segment, at the second session of UNFF.

3. Consideration with a view to recommending the parameters of a mandate for developing a legal framework on all types of forests

46. At its third session, UNFF may wish to initiate an expert group in order to prepare programme element 4 for its full consideration at its fifth session in 2005. The composition and modalities of work of this expert group may be decided at the third session. This programme element is explicitly linked to the principal function described in paragraph 2 (e) of Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/35 (see paras. 39-42 above on monitoring, assessment and reporting).

G. Review of the effectiveness of the international arrangement on forests

47. At its fifth session, UNFF is expected to review the effectiveness of the international arrangement on forests in performing all the principal functions. This will entail a review of the effectiveness of the international arrangement on forests including the plan of action, as well as addressing the future of UNFF. It would be necessary for UNFF to decide early the criteria by which the effectiveness of the international arrangement on forests would be reviewed and assessed. The review will need to take into account the institutional framework of UNFF (six functions), worldwide trends in forests and progress towards sustainable forest management and progress in implementing the IPF/IFF proposals for action, including progress in achieving the targets set out in the plan of action.

IV. Proposed decision

48. After considering the suggestions in the preceding sections, UNFF may wish to decide on:

The multi-year programme of work of the United Nations Forum on Forests

The multi-year programme of work of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) will reflect the objective, principal functions and specific actions of the Economic and Social Council resolution establishing UNFF (Council resolution 2000/35).

The multi-year programme of work of UNFF would consist of categories, reflecting its functions. At each of its sessions, UNFF would address a particular theme. During the period 2001-2005, the themes addressed by UNFF would collectively represent the elements reflected in the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, the Non-legally Binding Authoritative Statement of Principles for a Global Consensus on the Management, Conservation and Sustainable Development of All Types of Forests (Forest Principles), chapter 11 of Agenda 21 and the IPF/IFF proposals for action.

The multi-year programme of work of UNFF is summarized below and a schedule of work for the period 2001-2005 is presented in the annex.

Second session of UNFF

Thematic focus: Forest conservation, protected areas and environmental services

1. Facilitate and promote implementation:

- Adopt the plan of action;
- Lessons learned: regional and/or national presentations/showcases addressing the theme;
- Multi-stakeholder dialogue with major groups addressing the theme.

2. **Policy dialogue to foster a common understanding of sustainable forest management and address forest policy issues and emerging areas:**

- Implementation-oriented policy development and dialogue addressing the theme;
- Emerging issue addressing the theme.

3. **Enhance cooperation and policy and programme coordination:**

- Coordination and cooperation with forest-related policies and programmes of international organizations, institutions and instruments addressing the themes;
- Prepare inputs to the World Summit on Sustainable Development and the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity;
- UNFF work with the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF) addressing the theme;
- UNFF work with CPF on:
  - Streamlining of reporting formats and requirements related to UNFF work on monitoring, assessment and reporting;
  - Identification of a system and baseline for monitoring, assessment and reporting related to UNFF work on monitoring, assessment and reporting.

4. **Foster international and cross-sectoral cooperation and partnerships:**

- Financing in support of sustainable forest management.

5. **Monitoring, assessment and reporting:**

- Structure, frequency and mechanism of monitoring, assessment and reporting.

6. **Strengthen political commitment:**

- Hold high-level ministerial segment;
- Hold dialogue with heads of organizations.

7. **Review:**

- Decide criteria for effectiveness.

Third session of UNFF

Thematic focus: International trade and investment in support of sustainable forest management

1. **Facilitate and promote implementation:**

- Preliminary report on progress with UNFF plan of action by main actors;
- Lessons learned: regional and/or national presentations/showcases addressing the theme;
- Multi-stakeholder dialogue with major groups addressing the theme.

2. **Policy dialogue to foster a common understanding of sustainable forest management and address forest policy issues and emerging areas:**

- Implementation-oriented policy development and dialogue addressing the theme;
- Emerging issue addressing the theme.

3. **Enhance cooperation and policy and programme coordination:**

- Coordination and cooperation with forest-related policies and programmes of international organizations, institutions and instruments addressing the theme;
- Prepare inputs to a relevant forest-related event, as needed;
- UNFF work with CPF addressing the theme;
- UNFF work with CPF on:
  - Developing a common understanding of key concepts, definitions and terms.

4. **Foster international and cross-sectoral cooperation and partnerships:**

- Forests and cross-sectoral cooperation and interaction at the national, regional and global levels.

5. **Monitoring, assessment and reporting:**

- Criteria and indicators on sustainable development.

6. **Strengthen political commitment:**

- Initiate an expert group for the consideration with a view to recommending the parameters of a mandate for developing a legal framework on all types of forests.

Fourth session of UNFF

Thematic focus: Forests and human needs

1. **Facilitate and promote implementation:**

- Interim review of progress with plan of action by main actors;
- Lessons learned: regional and/or national presentations/showcases addressing the theme;
- Multi-stakeholder dialogue with major groups addressing the theme.

2. **Policy dialogue to foster a common understanding of sustainable forest management and address forest policy issues and emerging areas:**

- Implementation-oriented policy development and dialogue addressing the theme;
- Emerging issue addressing the theme.

3. **Enhance cooperation and policy and programme coordination:**

- Coordination and cooperation with forest-related policies and programmes of international organizations, institutions and instruments addressing themes;
- Prepare inputs to a relevant forest-related event, as needed;
- UNFF work with CPF addressing the theme.

4. **Foster international and cross-sectoral cooperation and partnerships:**

- Research and technology transfer in support of sustainable forest management.

5. **Monitoring, assessment and reporting:**

- Reporting and assessment.

Fifth session of UNFF

Thematic focus: Consideration of progress made and future action needed

1. **Facilitate and promote implementation:**

- Review of progress with plan of action by main actors;
- Multi-stakeholder dialogue with major groups addressing the theme.

2. **Monitoring, assessment and reporting:**

- Consideration of progress made and future actions needed.

3. **Strengthen political commitment:**

- Consideration with a view to recommending the parameters of a mandate for developing a legal framework on all types of forests;
- Dialogues with heads of organizations.

4. **Review:**

- Review of the effectiveness of the international arrangement on forests.

Notes

[1] Information note No. 1 on "Suggestions for a multi-year programme of work of the United Nations Forum on Forests" and information note No. 2 on "Proposed framework towards the development of the UNFF plan of action". These notes and other documents relevant to UNFF can be accessed at http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/forests.

[2] International Expert Consultation, on "Shaping the Programme of Work for the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF)", 27 November-1 December 2000, Bonn, Germany. The final report of the Expert Consultation was submitted as a document to UNFF's organizational session (E/CN.18/2001/2). The full proceedings can be accessed at http://www.gtz.de/twrp.

[3] *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992*, vol. I, *Resolutions Adopted by the Conference* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigendum), resolution 1, annex I.

[4] Ibid., annex III.

[5] Ibid., annex II.

[6] Information note No. 1 on "Suggestions for a multi-year programme of work of the United Nations Forum on Forests" was prepared by the Secretariat to facilitate informal consultations. That note and other documents relevant to UNFF can be accessed at http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/forests.

[7] The Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe.

[8] Other alternatives could include: the role of sustainable forest management in mitigating climate change; forests and water; and genetically modified forest stocks.

[9] A separate informal document was prepared by the UNFF secretariat for the informal consultations in order to provide information on some of the major forest-related events relevant to the work of UNFF in the next few years, namely, background note No. 2 entitled "Calendar of major international forest-related events". This and other UNFF documents can be accessed at http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/forests.

[10] The report of the Secretary-General (E/2000/85) entitled "Consolidated report on the work of the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council" provides valuable information about the work programmes of functional commissions of the Council.

[11] See United Nations Environment Programme, *Convention on Biological Diversity* (Environmental Law and Institution Programme Activity Centre), June 1992.

[12] See note by the Secretariat entitled "Initiation of UNFF's work with the Collaborative Partnership on Forests" (E/CN.18/2001/7).

[13] For example, by the sub-group of the Environmental Management Group (EMG) of the United Nations that is working on the streamlining of reporting on multilateral environmental agreements. The EMG was established by the General Assembly at its fifty-third session (Assembly resolution 53/242).

[14] It is expected that CPF will give further information on its functions and activities in support of UNFF at the first session of UNFF.

[15] CPF is planning to provide a concept paper on monitoring, assessment and reporting for the first session of UNFF.

[16] See also the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Towards the development of the UNFF plan of action" (E/CN.18/2001/6) and the note by the Secretariat entitled "Initiation of UNFF's work with the Collaborative Partnership on Forests" (E/CN.18/2001/7), both of which address this issue.

[17] Many mechanisms already exist, such as the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) Forest Resources Assessment, regional processes on criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management, the FAO State of the World's Forests, Commission on Sustainable Development national reports and FAO national focal point (nfp) surveys. Furthermore, various conventions, instruments and organizations collect national information on forests and/or have databanks or information networks on forest-related information, such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Convention on Biological Diversity, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC), the International Union of Forestry Research Organizations (IUFRO) Global Forest Information Service (GFIS), the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources — World Conservation Union (IUCN) etc.

Annex

Suggested schedule for the multi-year programme of work of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF)

Category		*First session, 2001*	*Second session, 2002*	*Third session, 2003*	*Fourth session, 2004*	*Fifth session, 2005*
Thematic focus		Adoption of multi-year programme of work	Forest conservation, protected areas and environmental services	International trade and investment in support of sustainable forest management	Forests and human needs	Consideration of progress made and future action needed
Facilitate and promote implementation (mandate reference: Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/35, paras. 2 (a) and 7 (b) (ii))	Plan of action	Guidance for developing plan of action with components	Develop target and timetables and address financial provisions for Intergovernmental Panel on Forests/ Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IPF/IFF) proposals for action. Adopt and launch plan of action	Preliminary one-year review by actors	Interim review by actors	Full review
	Lessons learned (presentation of country and/or regional perspectives)		Thematic	Thematic	Thematic	
	Multi-stakeholder dialogue		Thematic	Thematic	Thematic	

Category		*First session, 2001*	*Second session, 2002*	*Third session, 2003*	*Fourth session, 2004*	*Fifth session, 2005*
Policy dialogue to foster a common understanding of sustainable forest management and address forest policy issues and emerging areas (mandate reference: Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/35, para. 2 (b))	**Implementation-oriented policy development and dialogue**		**Thematic**	**Thematic**	**Thematic**	
	Emerging issues	**Decide on issue to discuss at next session**	**Thematic** **Decide on issue to discuss at next session**	**Thematic** **Decide on issue to discuss at next session**	**Thematic**	
Enhance cooperation and policy and programme coordination (mandate reference: Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/35, paras. 1, 2 (c) and 8)	Coordination and cooperation with forest-related policies and programmes of international organizations, institutions and instruments		Thematic Prepare a contribution to World Summit on Sustainable Development and sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity	Thematic	Thematic	

Category		*First session, 2001*	*Second session, 2002*	*Third session, 2003*	*Fourth session, 2004*	*Fifth session, 2005*
	Work with the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF)	Initiation of UNFF's work with CPF	Thematic Streamlining of existing reporting formats and requirements Identify baseline information for assessment	Thematic Develop a common understanding of key concepts, definitions and terms used at national, regional and international levels	Thematic	
Foster international and cross-sectoral cooperation and partnerships (mandate reference: Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/35, paras. 2 (d), 3 (c) (ii), 4 (k) and 9)		Initiation of expert group	Financing in support of sustainable forest management, including consideration mandated in paragraph 3 (c) (ii) of Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/35	Forests and cross-sectoral cooperation and interaction at the national, regional and global levels	Technology and research transfer in support of sustainable forest management	
Monitoring, assessment and reporting (mandate reference: Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/35, para. 2 (e))		Initiation of expert group	Structure, frequency and mechanism of monitoring, assessment and reporting	Criteria and indicators on sustainable forest management	Reporting	Consideration of progress made and future actions needed

Category		*First session, 2001*	*Second session, 2002*	*Third session, 2003*	*Fourth session, 2004*	*Fifth session, 2005*
Strengthen political commitment (mandate reference: Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/35, paras. 1, 3 (c) (i), 4 (j) and 17)	• High-level ministerial segment		Yes			Yes
	• Dialogue with heads of organizations		Yes			Yes
				Initiation of expert group on consideration with a view to recommending the parameters of a mandate for developing a legal framework on all types of forests		Consideration with a view to recommending the parameters of a mandate for developing a legal framework on all types of forests
Review (mandate reference: Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/35, para. 17)	Review of the effectiveness of the international arrangement on forests	Decide on success criteria for effectiveness				Review

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Item 3 of the provisional agenda*
Development of a plan of action for the implementation of Intergovernmental Panel on Forests/Intergovernmental Forum on Forests proposals for action, which will address financial provisions

Towards the development of the United Nations Forum on Forests plan of action

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) will consider, at its first substantive session, the following agenda item: "Development of a plan of action for the implementation of Intergovernmental Panel on Forests (IPF)/Intergovernmental Forum on Forest (IFF) proposals for action, which will address financial provisions" (see Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/35 of 18 October 2000, para. 7 (b) (ii)). The present report has been prepared to support deliberations towards decisions at the first substantive session of UNFF regarding this agenda item.

The plan of action is envisaged to serve as the main instrument of UNFF to strengthen policy implementation, as well as contribute to enhanced coordination, and to foster international cooperation. In addition, it will provide a basis for monitoring and assessing progress in the implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action. The plan of action as a component of the multi-year programme of work of UNFF, is proposed to be a recurrent agenda item at UNFF sessions.

The plan of action would be of fundamental importance in maintaining the political momentum, as well as in mobilizing political, financial and technical support towards the implementation of a set of programmatic components, based on

* E/CN.18/2001/4.

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the IPF/IFF proposals for action. At the national level, countries will need to identify and set their own priorities, through national forest programmes or other integrated programmes relevant to forests. The UNFF plan of action is envisaged to be complementary to, and supportive of, such national programmes, as well as to identify selective actions at the regional and global levels.

Countries are considered the main actors in implementing the UNFF plan of action, since most IPF/IFF proposals for action are addressed to them. However, countries are supported and facilitated by other actors such as international and regional organizations, institutions, and instruments, including those that are members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF), as well as the private sector and other major groups. Therefore, all the main actors, listed above, are expected to contribute to the implementation of the plan of action, inter alia, to secure adequate financial support.

In case the plan of action would not be completed and adopted at the first substantive session of UNFF, this report proposes a two-step approach. First, UNFF at its first substantive session may wish to address and decide on: (a) the programmatic component of the plan of action; (b) approaches for addressing financial provisions; (c) approaches for defining targets and timetables; and (d) approaches to monitoring, assessment and reporting on progress towards the implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action. The report proposes a set of eight programmatic components, supported by four cross-cutting components and a function for monitoring, assessment and reporting on progress. As step two, following the guidance by UNFF at its first substantive sessions, the UNFF secretariat, in close collaboration with CPF, would then develop a detailed plan of action to be presented to UNFF for adoption at its second substantive session in 2002.

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Introduction

1. The purpose of the present report is to provide a basis for deliberations and decisions by the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF), concerning the UNFF plan of action, at its first substantive session to be held at United Nations Headquarters in New York, from 11 to 22 June 2001. This report has been prepared in close consultation with the members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF).

2. Valuable inputs for the preparation of this report were provided by the Government-led initiative entitled, "Shaping the programme of work for the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF)",[1] co-sponsored by eight countries (Australia, Brazil, Canada, France, Germany, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Malaysia and Nigeria) and the informal consultations[2] held in February 2001, in conjunction with the UNFF organizational session.

3. During the informal consultations, the participants emphasized that the plan of action would be an instrument of UNFF to facilitate and promote implementation of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests/Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IPF/IFF) proposals for action and that new proposals for the plan of action should be avoided. Furthermore, it was recognized that the plan of action would need to specify targets and timetables and address financial provisions.

A. Mandate

4. This report has been prepared in response to the mandate adopted by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 2000/35 of 18 October 2000. In that resolution, the Council decided that at its first session UNFF would, inter alia, develop a plan of action for the implementation of IPF/IFF proposals for action, which would address financial provisions.

B. Implementation of Intergovernmental Panel on Forests/ Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IPF/IFF) proposals for action

5. The IPF/IFF proposals for action cover a wide range of complex and often interacting issues to promote and achieve sustainable forest management at the national, regional and global levels. The IPF/IFF proposals for action provide guidance to Governments, international organizations, the private sector and other major groups on how to further develop, implement and coordinate the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests. The UNFF plan of action would aim to set targets and timetables and address financial provisions, in the context of the implementation of the proposals for action negotiated during IPF and IFF.

6. Not only would the UNFF plan of action be targeted to achieve sustainable forest management per se, but it would also include other crucial overarching objectives such as human well-being, poverty alleviation, economic and social development and environmental protection.

7. The issue of promoting and facilitating the implementation of proposals for action was subjected to analysis and negotiations during IFF process. In the final report of the IFF, a set of factors were recognized as particularly important for implementing of the proposals for action, such as increasing the provisions for financial resources (para. 10 of the Non-legally Binding Authoritative Statement of Principles for a Global Consensus on the Management, Conservation and Sustainable Development of All Types of Forests (Forest Principles)); promoting integrated approaches through national forest programmes; creating relevant, effective, sustained and reliable donor support, including the special role of official development assistance (ODA); systematic assessment, by all countries, of the IPF/IFF proposals for action; creating and strengthening partnerships to encourage long-term political commitment; and encouraging participation by private sector and other major groups.

National level

8. Most of the IPF/IFF proposals for action were addressed mainly to countries. IFF considered national forest programmes, as defined by IPF, to be a viable framework for addressing forest sector issues, including implementation of proposals for action in a holistic, comprehensive and cross-sectoral manner. Furthermore, the plan of action offers an opportunity to provide coordinated support for developing countries and countries with economies in transition in their efforts to implement the IPF/IFF proposals for action that are targeted to countries. Priority actions at the national level would be identified by countries themselves and not by UNFF. Upon request, other actors such as CPF members, international and regional organizations and the private sector could assist countries in implementing their national priorities.

Regional and global levels

9. Many IPF/IFF proposals for action were also aimed at the regional and global levels and were directed to international and regional organizations, institutions and forest-related instruments. During the last decade, several forest-related regional processes have proved to be an effective way to promote and facilitate sustainable forest management. It is anticipated that regional involvement in the implementation of the plan of action, would be very valuable, particularly by drawing on the expertise and experience of the various regional processes and arrangements. The plan of action would also be an instrument of UNFF to strengthen implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals that call for action at the global level.

I. Principal functions of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) relevant to the plan of action

10. The principal functions of UNFF, as identified in Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/35, provide a useful framework for further policy development, policy and programme coordination on forest-related issues and fostering of international cooperation, as well as for monitoring and assessing progress of activities at the national, regional and global levels. As an integral part of the multi-year programme of work of UNFF, the plan of action would be the tool with which to fulfil the following function identified in Council resolution 2000/35: facilitate

and promote the implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action as well as other actions that may be agreed upon, including through national forest programmes and other integrated programmes relevant to forests; catalyse, mobilize and generate financial resources; and mobilize and channel technical and scientific resources to this end, including by taking steps towards the broadening and development of mechanisms and/or further initiatives to enhance international cooperation (para. 2 (a)).

11. The plan of action will also play a significant role as regards:

(a) Enhancing cooperation as well as policy and programme coordination on forest-related issues among relevant international and regional organizations, institutions and instruments, as well as contributing to synergies among them, including coordination among donors (Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/35, para. 2 (c));

(b) Fostering international cooperation, including North-South and public-private partnerships, as well as cross-sectoral cooperation at the national, regional and global levels (Council resolution 2000/35, para. 2 (d));

(c) Monitoring and assessing progress at the national, regional and global levels through reporting by Governments, as well as by regional and international organizations, institutions and instruments, and on that basis considering future actions needed (Council resolution 2000/35, para. 2 (e)).

II. The plan of action: an instrument for implementing the IPF/IFF proposals for action

A. Possible programmatic components of the plan of action

12. Progress towards the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests is a long-term process. With a limited time-horizon, such as the initial five years of UNFF, all countries may not make equally substantial achievements in capacity-building, policy development, planning processes and creation of an enabling environment and supporting infrastructure towards sustainable forest management. Accordingly, the UNFF plan of action is seen only as the initial phase in a long-term process.

13. To include all IPF/IFF proposals for action in the plan of action is perhaps neither feasible nor practical considering the short initial time-horizon of UNFF, as well as the limited financial, human, scientific and technical resources available for implementation. However, the UNFF plan of action provides a unique opportunity to focus the attention of the international community on: (a) activities that are strategically important to support the efforts of countries at the national level; and (b) activities that are more appropriate for implementation by countries and other actors at the regional and global levels. To facilitate such tasks, it is proposed to cluster and/or summarize the proposals for action into a manageable number of programmatic components for immediate implementation.[6] It would be desirable to identify programmatic components of the plan of action, on which the international community could focus its attention in the forthcoming years.

14. In the report of the Secretary-General to IFF at its fourth session (E/CN.17/IFF/2000/4) on international arrangements and mechanisms to promote the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests, the programme elements and proposals for action of IPF/IFF were clustered into 16 elements (box 1). These elements could constitute the basis for identifying possible programmatic components. All these components have national, as well as regional and global applications.

Box 1

Set of 16 elements based on the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, IPF and IFF deliberations on forests

1. Formulation and implementation of national forest programmes.
2. Promoting public participation.
3. Combating deforestation and forest degradation.
4. Traditional forest-related knowledge (TFRK).
5. Forest-related scientific knowledge.
6. Forest health and productivity.
7. Criteria and indicators of sustainable forest management.
8. Economic, social and cultural aspects of forests.
9. Forest conservation and protection of unique types of forests and fragile ecosystems.
10. Monitoring, assessment and reporting; and concepts, terminology and definitions.
11. Rehabilitation and conservation strategies for countries with low forest cover.
12. Rehabilitation and restoration of degraded lands, and the promotion of natural and planted forests.
13. Maintaining forest cover to meet present and future needs.
14. Financial resources.
15. International trade and sustainable forest management.
16. International cooperation in capacity-building and access to, and transfer of, environmentally sound technologies to support sustainable forest management.

B. Addressing financial provisions

15. In recent years, the international community has promulgated numerous international plans of action in order to meet diverse challenges. The plans adopted so far include large programmes on a global or regional basis. While these plans are targeted at various actors, many lack a clear statement of appropriate financial

provisions and/or mechanisms to facilitate implementation. Accordingly, many plans have remained largely aspirational in character.

16. UNFF would need to proceed quickly towards the development and implementation of a realistic and effective plan of action in a pragmatic manner. Implementation involves efficient deployment of human and financial resources and strengthening of international cooperation. To achieve an effective plan of action, with appropriate financial provisions, is a major challenge that UNFF at its first substantive session would need to address and about which it would need to give guidance. In this context, it will be crucial to address the relationship between addressing financial provisions of the plan of action and the policy development deliberations on the issues of financial resources for supporting sustainable forest management, which is proposed for UNFF deliberation as a cross-cutting issue in its multi-year programme of work.[7]

17. All countries, both developing and developed, would need, to the extent of their ability, to secure and allocate adequate resources for implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action. However, the financing should take into account that countries are at different stages of economic development and that national activities would, as far as possible, be financed from domestic resources. Developing countries, particularly the least developing countries, including many countries with low forest cover, would need special consideration in financial cooperation, to sustainably manage their forests in order to meet their needs for forest products and services and in some cases to expand their forest cover. The provision of increased financial resources, inter alia, through innovative approaches, as well as technical assistance and transfer of environmentally sound technology at the international and national levels, was highlighted in the final report of IFF.[8] It was also stated that such support is particularly needed for capacity-building, and for creating participatory and innovative mechanisms for financing sustainable forest management.

18. The scope of the activities of the UNFF plan of action, their possible sources of funds and the main focus of expected benefits are presented in the table.

Sources of possible financing for the activities of the UNFF plan of action

Scope of activities	*Possible sources of funds*	*Provided by*	*Implementing agency*	*Main focus of expected benefits*
National	Domestic resources	• National budget	• National institutions	Local
		• Major groups	• Non-governmental organizations	National
		• Private sector	• Private	
	Bilateral	Donors	National institutions	Local
				National
	Multilateral	Financial institutions	International organizations	Local
		Donors	United Nations agencies	National
Regional	Bilateral	Donors	Regional/international organizations	Regional
	Multilateral	Financial institutions	United Nation agencies	Regional
Global	Multilateral	Donors	Regional/international organizations	Global
		Financial institutions	United Nations agencies	

C. Identifying targets and timetables

19. The establishment of targets and timetables will be crucial for assessing the effectiveness of the UNFF plan of action, as well as for the entire UNFF process, which will be reviewed after the initial mandate of five years. The assessment of progress in implementing the plan of action will be a major component of this overall review. The establishment of targets and timetables provides the criteria against which progress in the implementation of the plan of action can be assessed objectively.

20. Ideally, the UNFF targets would need to be concrete and achievable. The targets should, where possible, be quantitative in nature, in order to easily measure progress. However, in some cases, the targets could be qualitative.

21. In choosing targets, UNFF must look ahead. All targets and timetables should be realistic so that their achievement, within the five-year period, would be feasible. It takes considerable lead time to develop action; however, forward-looking approaches are necessary in order to address present and future needs.

D. Monitoring, assessment and reporting on progress

22. Regarding monitoring, assessment and reporting on progress in the implementation of the plan of action, there is a need for all countries to systematically monitor and assess the implementation and to report on progress to UNFF. In addition, in order to provide a comprehensive assessment, international and regional organizations, including CPF, various regional processes, donors, the private sector and other major groups, should be invited to report on their progress towards the implementation of the plan of action.

23. Furthermore, progress on implementation of the UNFF plan of action could be considered one criterion against which the overall review of the international arrangement on forests would be carried out by UNFF at its fifth session in 2005.[9]

III. The plan of action: an opportunity for fostering synergies

24. The UNFF plan of action would entail the participation of all main actors and implementing bodies to whom these proposals have been addressed (namely, countries, international organizations, including CPF, regional processes, the private sector and other major groups).

25. As a recurrent item in the UNFF multi-year programme of work, the plan of action would provide an opportunity for: fostering synergies among the main actors; reviewing progress in implementing the IPF/IFF proposals for action; identifying gaps and actions needed to address those gaps; and reviewing the work of different actors involved. Since UNFF is a body without any operational mandate, it can only facilitate and promote implementation. The responsibility for implementing the plan of action, including securing adequate financial, technical and human resources, will lie with the countries themselves and other actors.

A. Envisaged role of countries

26. Countries will play a major role in implementing the plan of action, since most IPF/IFF proposals for action are specifically addressed to them. The national forest programmes and other integrated programmes relevant to forests would serve as the fundamental instruments for implementation at the national level. These programmes would serve as the policy framework for identifying national priorities, seeking political support and addressing forest-related issues in a holistic, comprehensive and cross-sectoral manner.

27. Countries would need to define clear objectives and criteria to promote and assess effective implementation of sustainable forest management. In addition, the national policy framework would need to be kept under review, in order to continue to embody capabilities for cross-sectoral planning, coordination and implementation, and adequate resource allocation. In particular, IFF agreed that each country should establish a focal point to guide and coordinate the implementation and assessment process of the IPF/IFF proposals for action, including the participation of all relevant interested parties.[10]

B. Envisaged role of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests

28. In Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/35, the Council decided to invite executive heads of relevant organizations of the United Nations system and heads of other relevant international and regional organizations, institutions and instruments to form a collaborative partnership on forests to support the work of UNFF and to enhance cooperation and coordination among participants, and facilitate and promote coordinated and cooperative action, including joint programming. Accordingly, it is envisaged that all members of CPF will, upon request, play an active role in assisting countries in the implementation of the UNFF plan of action at the national level. They can also assist through their current and future programmes, joint programmes, projects and other activities, such as mobilizing and catalysing actions at the regional and global levels.

29. CPF members would continue, consistent with the practice of IPF and IFF, to take responsibility as "lead agencies", assuming the key responsibility for specific elements of the programme of work of UNFF, including programmatic components of the plan of action. CPF members are also expected to encourage the engagement and involvement of other collaborators with respect to implementing specific actions. Information on the establishment of CPF, its specific tasks and interactions between UNFF and CPF is presented in a note by the Secretariat (E/CN.18/2001/7).

30. The role of CPF members would be subject to decisions by their respective governing bodies. While CPF might welcome the responsibility of facilitating the implementation of specific regional and global activities of the UNFF plan of action, it should be noted that the contributions of CPF members would be determined by the level of their present financial and human resources.

C. Public-private partnerships

31. It would be desirable to mobilize private sector resources for specific activities in the UNFF plan of action. The role of the private sector in the implementation of the UNFF plan of action could be twofold: first, as an important implementing agent of specific IPF/IFF proposals for action that are specifically addressed to the private sector; and second, as a crucial financing source to complement national and international public funds. However, IFF recognized that private sector investment should not be considered a substitute for international public funding, including ODA.[11] In addition, the IPF/IFF process recognized the important, but differentiated, contributions of the public and private sectors, while stressing the role of Governments in fostering an enabling policy environment. The IPF/IFF also stressed that, in developing countries, the domestic and international public funding related to forests is needed for leveraging private sector funding.

D. Enhancing coordination among donors

32. The need for improving donor coordination in assisting developing countries in advancing sustainable forest management practices was duly recognized during the IPF/IFF process. The role of donors in supporting the implementation of national, regional and global activities is essential for securing successful implementation of the UNFF plan of action. In order to achieve more favourable

response from the donors, it would be desirable to emphasize the economic, social and environmental benefits, as well as the contribution of sustainable forest management towards poverty alleviation and overall human well-being.

33. Donors could assist in the preparation and implementation of the UNFF plan of action by providing coordinated inputs on specific activities within each programmatic component of the plan of action. Donors could also catalyse and facilitate implementation of regional and global processes. Throughout the implementation of their activities, donors could also prepare coordinated progress reports to UNFF, and operate in an open, transparent and flexible manner.

34. The financial support for individual programmatic components in the UNFF plan of action could be mobilized with the active participation of interested donor countries, through contributions directly to countries, to members of CPF and/or to any other actor or implementing body under the UNFF plan of action. The international donor community could contribute substantively to supporting the implementation of the UNFF plan of action by:

(a) Creating initiatives and partnerships to encourage long-term political commitment for relevant, effective, sustained and reliable donor support;

(b) Focusing donor cooperation and coordination in support of country and regional efforts on agreed programmatic components, targets and timetables of the UNFF plan of action;

(c) Designing innovative strategies to mobilize finance, technical assistance and transfer of environmentally sound technology at the international level;

(d) Facilitating the participation by the private sector and other major groups.

E. Envisaged role of major groups

35. Participation of major groups, including non-governmental organizations, indigenous people, the private sector, youth, women and other major groups, in implementing the plan of action is essential for securing success in assisting countries in achieving sustainable forest management. Major groups have been recognized as significant contributors during the IPF/IFF process.

36. In the UNFF plan of action, major groups could play a crucial role in assisting and supporting the implementation, coordination and mobilization of international cooperation as well as in facilitating the implementation of the plan of action. Accordingly, their participation at an early stage in the plan of action is desirable, in respect of providing inputs on developing activities and subsequently implementing them, as well as monitoring, assessment and reporting on progress.

IV. Steps towards the development of the plan of action

37. According to Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/35, UNFF will, at its first substantive session, develop a plan of action, which will address financial provisions. However, in case the plan of action is not completed at the first

substantive session, with agreed activities, targets, timetables and financial provisions, a two-step approach is proposed below.

A. Step one: decisions to be adopted at the first substantive session of UNFF

38. The Forum at its first session may wish to decide on the framework within which the plan of action should be developed. In order to accomplish this, UNFF at its first substantive session would need to take decisions on: (a) the programmatic components to be included in the plan of action; (b) approaches for addressing financial provisions; (c) defining targets and timetables; and (d) monitoring, assessment and reporting on progress towards the implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action.

1. Decision on possible programmatic components of the plan of action

39. UNFF may wish to consider the following criteria for selecting possible programmatic components of the plan of action:

- Fundamental for promoting and implementing sustainable forest management;
- Policy is mature and ready for implementation;
- Politically significant and beneficial to human well-being;
- Wide and balanced geographical application; and inclusive of priorities of both forest-rich and forest-poor countries;
- Potential to achieve demonstrable progress, during the initial five-year period of the plan of action.

40. It is proposed that the 16 issues presented in box 1 should be used as the basis for defining the programmatic components of the plan of action. For illustrative purposes, these 16 issues have been merged and clustered, by using the above criteria, into 8 programmatic components; 4 cross-cutting components; and 1 function (box 2).

41. The future development of the plan of action may consist in elaborating the set of activities, targets, timetables and financial provisions for each of its programmatic components. UNFF may wish to request its secretariat to coordinate, with the support and assistance of CPF, the development of the UNFF plan of action. UNFF may wish to decide that the outline described in box 3 be used for the preparation of each programmatic component of the plan of action by the respective lead agency in consultation with other members of CPF and other actors such as countries, international and regional organizations, institutions, instruments, the private sector, non-governmental organizations and other major groups.

Box 2

Proposed programmatic components of the UNFF plan of action (based on the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, IPF and IFF deliberations on forests)

Programmatic components

1. Formulation and implementation of national forest programmes.
2. Combating deforestation and forest degradation, including maintaining forest cover to meet present and future needs.
3. Traditional forest-related knowledge (TFRK).
4. Criteria and indicators of sustainable forest management.
5. Forest conservation and protection of unique types of forests and fragile ecosystems.
6. Needs and requirements of countries with low forest cover.
7. Restoration of degraded lands, and the promotion of natural and planted forests.
8. International trade and sustainable forest management.

Cross-cutting components*

9. Forest-related scientific knowledge.
10. Promoting public participation.
11. Financial resources.
12. International cooperation in capacity-building and access to, and transfer of, environmentally sound technologies to support sustainable forest management.

Monitoring function*

13. Monitoring, assessment and reporting.

* Issue to be considered in the implementation of all eight programmatic components of the plan of action.

Box 3
Outline proposed for the table of contents of each programmatic component of the plan of action

1. Title.
2. Background.
3. Objectives.
4. Activities (national, regional and global).
5. Supporting cross-cutting components.
6. Targets and timetable.
7. Financial provisions.
8. Institutional support and coordination, including main actors responsible for implementation.
9. Monitoring, assessment and reporting on progress.

2. Decision on how to address financial provisions

42. It is expected that, at its first session, UNFF will provide guidance on the potential modalities for addressing financial provisions in the plan of action. The issue of financing sustainable development in general has been in the international forest policy agenda since the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. The IPF and IFF processes have explored this issue, not only through their own deliberations, but also through the workshops held in Pretoria, South Africa,[12] and Croydon, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.[13] UNFF also benefited greatly from its first country-led initiative entitled "International Workshop of Experts on Financing Sustainable Forest Management", 22-25 January 2001, Oslo, Norway.[14] This workshop explored ways and means to implement IPF/IFF proposals for action related to financing sustainable forest management.

43. In this regard, UNFF may also wish to consider the various modalities being employed by the international community for financing some of the existing action plans and/or modalities that have the potential to support the specific needs of the UNFF plan of action. The descriptions of these modalities (see annex I) by no means constitute an exhaustive list and other innovative financial mechanisms may also be considered. It is proposed that UNFF at its first substantive session should examine the range of potential financing modalities and decide on the appropriate approaches towards addressing financial provisions of the plan of action.

3. Decision on targets and timetables

44. It would be desirable for UNFF to provide guidance on specific targets for each of the programmatic components for the next five years.

45. UNFF at its first session may wish to decide on the approaches for targets and timetables for the implementation of each programmatic component of the plan of

action. Proposals for targets and timetables would then be further elaborated for each programmatic component of the plan of action by the respective lead agency of CPF and presented for consideration and adoption by UNFF at its second substantive session.

46. For illustrative purpose only, examples of possible targets from IPF/IFF proposals for action related to national forest programmes and criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management are provided in annex II. Similar types of targets could be developed for all programmatic components of the UNFF plan of action.

47. In the initial time-horizon of the plan of action, the timetables for specific targets may extend from one to four years. Nevertheless, the plan of action is considered a long-term goal, and the proposed framework towards the development and implementation through the year 2005 may be viewed only as phase one in this long-term process.

4. Decision on monitoring, assessment and reporting on progress

48. UNFF at its first session may wish to decide on the approaches for monitoring, assessment and reporting on progress in the implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action related to the UNFF plan of action.

49. Possible options for monitoring and assessing progress in the implementation of the plan of action include: (a) voluntary national reports provided by Governments; and (b) other existing information and reports provided by other implementing bodies, for example, CPF, international and regional organizations, the private sector, non-governmental organizations and other actors.

B. Step two: the adoption of the UNFF plan of action

50. Following the guidance provided in the decisions adopted by UNFF at its first substantive session, the UNFF secretariat, in cooperation with CPF, would then develop a more detailed proposal for each programmatic component of the plan of action, including all the elements proposed in the outline presented in box 3. The developed draft plan of action would be presented to UNFF for adoption. It is also expected that UNFF at its second substantive session would adopt and launch the UNFF plan of action, and convey this information to the World Summit on Sustainable Development, to be held in Johannesburg, South Africa, in 2002, as an example of advancements achieved in the intergovernmental deliberations on forest policy.

51. At sessions subsequent to its second substantive session, UNFF would monitor the overall implementation of the plan of action based on mid-term reports prepared by countries and other implementing bodies. This activity would contribute to the five-year review of the international arrangement on forests at the fifth substantive session of UNFF.

V. Conclusion

52. In conclusion, at its first substantive session UNFF may wish to decide on the following regarding its plan of action:

(a) Programmatic components;

(b) Approaches for addressing financial provisions;

(c) Approaches for defining targets and timetables;

(d) Approaches to monitoring, assessment and reporting on progress in implementation;

(e) Guidance on proposed implementation and/or development of the UNFF plan of action.

Notes

[1] See the report of the International Expert Consultation on "Shaping the programme of work for the United Nations Forum on Forests", held in Bonn, Germany, from 27 November to 1 December 2000 (E/CN.18/2001/2). The report was transmitted by the Government of Germany to the organizational session of UNFF in February 2001.

[2] See "Proposed framework towards the development of the UNFF Plan of Action", information note No. 2 for the informal consultations, 13-16 February 2001. This note and other relevant documents from the UNFF secretariat are available on the Internet at : http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/forests.

[3] See full text of programme element I.A, particularly para. 9, of the report of the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests on its fourth session (E/CN.17/2000/14).

[4] *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992*, vol. I, *Resolutions Adopted by the Conference* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigendum), resolution 1, annex III.

[5] See para. 21 of the report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.18/2001/5) on the multi-year programme of work of the United Nations Forum on Forests.

[6] As an example of how the IPF/IFF proposals for action can be summarized in order to assist countries in measuring progress and establishing priorities for sustainable forest management, see "Summary of proposals for action: the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests and the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests produced by the Commonwealth of Australia, Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, 2000, available on the Internet at: http://www.affa.gov.au/affa/subjects/publications.html. Also, see the *Practitioner's Guide to the Implementation of the IPF Proposals for Action*, produced by the Six-country Initiative in support of IFF, 2nd ed., May 1999, which is available on the Internet at: http://www.gtz.de/twrp/ under the library section. The Six-country Initiative held an International Expert Consultation in Baden-Baden, Germany, 29 June-3 July 1998. The report (E/CN.17/IFF/1998/12) of the consultation (Government-led Initiative in Support of IFF entitled "Putting the IFF proposals for action into practice") was transmitted by the Government of Germany to the second session of IFF.

[7] See sect. III.D entitled "Proposed multi-year programme of work: foster international and cross-sectoral cooperation" of the report of the Secretary-General on the proposed multi-year programme of work of the United Nations Forum on Forests (E/CN.18/2001/5).

[8] See paras. 9 and 30 of the report of the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests on its fourth session (E/CN.17/2000/14).

[9] See sect. III.E of the report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.18/2001/5) on the multi-year programme of work of the United Nations Forum on Forests. Also, CPF plans to provide for the first substantive session of UNFF a concept paper on monitoring, assessment and reporting in UNFF.

[10] See para. 9 (e) and (f) of the report of the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests on its fourth session (E/CN.17/2000/14).

[11] Ibid., para. 23.

[12] Workshop on Financial Mechanisms and Sources of Finance for Sustainable Forestry, 4-7 June 1996, Pretoria, South Africa.

[13] Workshop on Financing of Sustainable Forest Management, 11-13 October 1999, Croydon, Unided Kingdom. Final report available on the Internet at: *http://www.undp.org/seed/forest/pages/publications/index.html*.

[14] International Workshop of Experts on Financing Sustainable Forest Management, 22-25 January 2001, Oslo, Norway. Final report available on the Internet at: *http://www.cifor.cgiar.org/fsfm/index.htm*.

Annex I

Potential financing modalities

For illustrative purposes only, modalities that are being employed by the international community to finance some of the existing action plans and/or that have the potential to support the specific needs of the UNFF plan of action are described briefly below.

Consortium of different sources of funding

Activities in several action plans may be supported through cooperation among a range of various sources of funding (domestic, multilateral, bilateral, private sector, major groups, non-governmental organizations etc.). Under this financing modality, the plan provides a framework and the support to the implementation of specific activities originates from various funding sources. The provision of funds is often accomplished on a case-by-case basis. For example, certain activities are supported entirely by domestic resources, others by bilateral or multilateral international cooperation or by the private sector.

The Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) type of approach

In consultative meetings of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) type, particular donor countries, institutions or organizations would accept specific financial responsibilities for particular activities. This modality comes close to organizing formal pledging meetings, which, except when there is a narrow range of activities, it might be difficult for UNFF to organize. The success of CGIAR may have resulted from the financial "floor" provided by some donor Governments and the supportive role played by the World Bank.

Establishment of an international fund

The proposal for establishing an international financial mechanism to support sustainable forest management was extensively deliberated during the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests/Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IPF/IFF) process and is yet to be resolved. In this regard, it was proposed that an international fund for forests be established in order to support, inter alia, the additional costs during the transition period towards sustainable forest management. It was suggested that an international financial mechanism for forests could: (a) involve participating donors and beneficiaries in relevant decision-making; (b) respond to national needs and support national forest programmes; (c) facilitate internalizing externalities of forests in promoting sustainable forest management; (d) build on or link with national financing mechanisms; (e) be transparent and administratively efficient; (f) complement the financing mechanisms of relevant multilateral agreements; and (g) have secure and sustained funding sources. No consensus was reached on an international financial mechanism and strong reservations were voiced regarding the establishment of an international fund for forests.

Establishment of special trust funds

The establishment of trust funds, based on assessed contributions, has been one workable option for some existing sizeable plans of action. If UNFF was to utilize this kind of option, it might wish to have it targeted on specific programmatic components. Trust funds also offer the possibility of earmarked contributions to support the implementation of specific national, regional and global activities.

Annex II

Examples of targets

Examples of possible targets for the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) plan of action are described below, for illustrative purposes only.

National forest programmes

The current situation concerning national forest programmes, according to a survey of 145 countries undertaken by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in 1998-1999,[a] is as follows: 96 per cent of them (that is to say, 139) had national forest programmes in various stages of development but in only 44 per cent of the countries (that is to say, 64) were those programmes in the implementation stage.

Possible quantitative targets to be attained by the year 2005 for UNFF could include the following:[b]

- Development of national forest programmes: an increase from the current 139 countries to 150 countries;
- Implementation of national forest programmes: an increase from the current 64 countries to 100 countries.

Possible qualitative target for UNFF could include the following:

- All new national forest programmes would be developed according to the "guidelines" of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests (IPF).[c]

Criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management

Targets for UNFF to be attained by the year 2005 could include the following:

- Worldwide coverage of regional criteria and indicators processes;[d]
- National criteria and indicators to be developed in 100 countries;[e]
- Criteria and indicators to be used as a framework for best forest practices;[f]
- Compatibility between national-level criteria and indicators in different regional processes to be increased, also with a view to the possible adoption by UNFF of a common (global) set of criteria and indicators.[g]

Notes

[a] FAO, "Status and progress in implementation of national forest programmes: outcome of a survey by FAO" (1999).

[b] The targets are derived from paragraph 17 (a) of the report of the Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Panel on Forests on its fourth session (New York, 11-21 February 1997) (E/CN.17/1997/12).

[c] Ibid.

[d] Ibid., para. 115 (c).

[e] Ibid., para. 115 (a).

[f] Ibid., para. 115 (b).

[g] Ibid.

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Initiation of the work of the United Nations Forum on Forests with the Collaborative Partnership on Forests

Initiation of the work of the United Nations Forum on Forests with the Collaborative Partnership on Forests

Note by the Secretariat

Summary

The present note describes the mandate, role and objectives of the recently established Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF). It also gives information on the decision-making systems of various CPF members, as they are autonomous organizations with their own governing bodies and mandates. The note concludes by suggesting some specific tasks that the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) may wish to invite CPF to undertake, in support of the work of UNFF.

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Introduction

1. The present note has been prepared in close collaboration with the members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF) to facilitate discussion under item 4 of the provisional agenda entitled "Initiation of the work of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) with the Collaborative Partnership on Forests"[1] at the first substantive session of UNFF. The objective of this note is to inform Governments and other stakeholders on the nature of the CPF arrangement, the functioning of the governing bodies of its member organizations, and the decision-making process regarding their programmes. The note also outlines types of interface between UNFF and CPF, as well as the ways in which UNFF could guide CPF.[2] Finally, the note proposes tasks that UNFF at its first substantive session may wish to request CPF to undertake in support of the work of UNFF.

I. Establishment of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF)

A. Mandate of CPF

2. In its resolution 2000/35 of 18 October 2000 on an international arrangement on forests, the Economic and Social Council, in addition to establishing UNFF, decided to invite the executive heads of relevant organizations of the United Nations system and heads of other relevant international and regional organizations, institutions and instruments to form a collaborative partnership on forests to support the work of UNFF and to enhance cooperation and coordination among participants, and to call upon their governing bodies and their heads to support the activities of the collaborative partnership on forests to achieve the goals of UNFF (para. 3 (b)).

3. In the same resolution, the Economic and Social Council also recommended that the collaborative partnership on forests build on a high-level, informal group, such as the Inter-Agency Task Force on Forests (ITFF), which would receive guidance from UNFF; facilitate and promote coordinated and cooperative action, including joint programming and submissions of coordinated proposals to their respective governing bodies; and facilitate donor coordination. Such a partnership would submit coordinated inputs and progress reports to the UNFF, operate in an open, transparent and flexible manner, and undertake periodic reviews of its effectiveness (para. 8).

B. The Inter-Agency Task Force on Forests (ITFF) as foundation for CPF

4. The informal, high-level Inter-Agency Task Force on Forests (ITFF) was established in 1995 to support the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests (IPF) (1995-1997) and, subsequently, the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IFF) (1997-2000). ITFF supported the IPF/IFF process by contributing to the preparation of the reports of the Secretary-General on various IPF/IFF programme elements as well as by implementing IPF/IFF proposal for action. It consisted of the following eight international forest-related organizations:

- Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity;[3]
- Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR);
- Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat;
- Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO);
- International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO);
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP);
- United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP);
- World Bank.

C. Establishment and role of CPF

5. In response to the Economic and Social Council's recommendation and based on the six-year working experience of the ITFF partnership, ITFF initiated the formation of CPF among the eight ITFF members at its meeting on 11 February 2001 in New York.[4] Subsequently, CPF was formally established in its first meeting on 4 and 5 April 2001 in Rome. The CPF membership is expected to expand to include a total of about a dozen international forest-related

organizations, institutions and instruments that have the capacity, programmes and substantive resources to facilitate the implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action.

6. CPF will support the work of UNFF in the promotion of the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests and in the strengthening of political commitment to this end.

7. The principle objectives of CPF in support of UNFF are to:

(a) Support the deliberations of the UNFF;

(b) Enhance cooperation and coordination among the members;

(c) Strengthen political commitment to sustainable forest management;

(d) Facilitate the implementation of IPF/IFF proposals for action, particularly through the UNFF plan of action;[5]

(e) Assist UNFF in monitoring and reporting on the progress towards attaining the UNFF's objectives, particularly on the progress in the implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action.[6]

8. The operational work of CPF will concentrate on contributing to the development and implementation of the UNFF plan of action, as well as on the monitoring of progress. The CPF members will continue, within the framework of their mandates, resources and competence, to implement and support the national implementation of IPF/IFF proposals for action, through their current and future programmes and joint programmes, projects and other activities. Although the major responsibility for sustainable forest management lies with countries, CPF has a crucial advisory and facilitator role in support of the national implementation. The CPF activities would aim, in particular, at mobilizing technical and financial resources as well as catalysing supporting activities. CPF has reiterated its willingness to contribute to the development and, in particular, the implementation of the UNFF plan of action. It has also agreed to develop and execute a concrete and coordinated approach to this end.

9. CPF will also assist UNFF in the development of a system on monitoring, assessment and reporting on progress towards attaining UNFF's objectives. CPF would, in particular, assist the UNFF in developing a reporting system on progress in the implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action, as well as in the overall assessment of the progress.

10. The CPF members will need to enhance their complementarities and strive for better coordination and greater coherence of action, as well as to focus their collective activities and programmes to support policies, strategies and actions promoted by UNFF. There is a need, in particular, to encourage joint programming among CPF members based on identification of priority issues that are most in need of synergy and joint action.

D. Lead agency system and collaboration with other organizations

11. The CPF members will adopt a lead agency system similar to that of ITFF. The lead agency would take responsibility to lead, in accordance with its mandate, available resources, competence and comparative advantage, one or more relevant programme elements of the UNFF multi-year programme of work[7] and programmatic component(s) of the UNFF plan of action. This is, in particular, to implement specific IPF/IFF proposals for action; to support the national implementation; and to provide expertise and other support to facilitate the UNFF deliberations. The challenge is to further strengthen the partnerships and establish new modalities of cooperation both among the CPF members and between the CPF and other partners so as to make the best use of all the available forest-related institutional capabilities.[8] Therefore, a crucial role of the lead agency would be to strengthen coordinated activities among the relevant CPF members as well as other partners in order to maximize synergies; to mobilize the best possible resources and expertise; and to avoid overlaps in the work of the CPF member organizations.

12. The CPF will operate in an open, transparent and flexible manner. Other relevant and interested international and regional organizations, institutions and instruments that are not members of CPF, including non-governmental organizations, private sector entities and other major groups, will be invited to contribute to specific activities of CPF, for example, certain projects, programmes, expert meetings and other activities, where their competencies would enrich the thematic work of CPF in the implementation of IPF/IFF proposals for action.

13. To facilitate an interactive interface between CPF and other collaborators, CPF has agreed to establish a CPF Network that would be open to the participation of a wide range of these international and regional organizations, institutions and instruments.

II. Governing bodies of the CPF organizations and their decision-making systems

14. The establishment of CPF, as a new international partnership on forests, represents the willingness and commitment of the CPF member organizations to cooperate on policy implementation, and to jointly support the work of UNFF. Decisions made in the governing bodies of the CPF member organizations determine their role and activities in support of UNFF. The decision-making systems of the governing bodies of the CPF members vary considerably in terms of their membership, main functions, governing meetings, subsidiary bodies (such as committees), funding mechanisms and means to allocate funds for their programme activities.

15. Each organization's resources for the administration and implementation of their programmes are derived from distinct sources, such as:

- Regular budgets: funded by the member States from assessed contributions and whose appropriations for various departments are determined by the administrative body of the organization;
- Voluntary funds: funds to provide additional financing for specific programmes of the organization guided by the decision of its governing body;
- Trust funds: extrabudgetary funds for programmes that complement or supplement activities of the organization, usually decided upon by the management of the organization. Such funds are usually agreed to and negotiated between the organization and donors, and form separate accounts.

16. For more detailed information on the governing bodies of the CPF members and their decision-making systems categorized by organizations, see the annex.

III. Interface between the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) and CPF

A. Interaction between UNFF and CPF

17. CPF has been formed to support UNFF in achieving its objectives. UNFF would need, however, to have realistic expectations from CPF. The CPF member organizations would need to seek necessary financial and human resources in order to provide expertise and to carry out the specific tasks in support of the UNFF programme of work, in particular as related to implementation and monitoring of the UNFF plan of action. On the other hand, the CPF members can benefit from the support to UNFF, for example, through: increased financial and human resources; higher priority on forest programmes (in those organizations that deal also with issues other than forests); and improved coordination which would lead to minimizing overlaps in programming and to increased joint programming.

18. The various different ways for UNFF and CPF to interface are described directly below:

(a) UNFF can send recommendations to the governing bodies of CPF members, following the practice of IFF which called upon relevant governing bodies, for example, to identify practical means for mobilizing their diverse strengths and capabilities to support country-led efforts in implementing the proposals for action adopted by IPF; to foster synergies; and to clarify the respective roles and work to be carried out in the forest-related programmes of action of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and its follow-up;[9]

(b) In order to influence the work of the CPF member organizations in a way that reflects the priorities set by UNFF, the member States of UNFF would need to transmit consistent messages to the governing bodies of the CPF organizations. This requires enhanced information-sharing and coordination both within and among the countries that are members of the governing bodies. By the end of March 2001, the following governing bodies of the CPF member organizations had endorsed their support to UNFF and to CPF: the International Tropical Timber Council (ITTC), the Committee on Forestry of FAO, the Governing Council of UNEP, and the Board of

Trustees of CIFOR. The process of similar endorsements has also been initiated within the other CPF members;

(c) A very important mode for interface between UNFF and CPF will be the high-level ministerial segments which would include high-level dialogues between ministers and heads of the CPF organizations.[10] Such dialogues will provide a unique opportunity to further strengthen political commitment and to give guidance to the work of CPF;

(d) At each UNFF session, Governments and the CPF members would also have an opportunity to interact directly. CPF is expected to report on its activities to UNFF. This would provide an opportunity for Governments to seek information on the activities of the CPF members as well as to provide feedback and guidance to future activities of CPF. On the other hand, it would also provide an opportunity for CPF to inform Governments on the state of, and trends in, the world's forests and other forest-related issues, and give advice on the course of the policy deliberations, for example, by identifying emerging issues; informing UNFF on new findings and results of in-depth analyses; pointing out obstacles to implementation; and proposing solutions;

(e) Equally important is the dialogue between the CPF members and major groups during the multi-stakeholder dialogues in UNFF, as well as through the CPF networking.

B. Type of guidance to be provided by UNFF to CPF

19. UNFF's guidance to CPF could be at the:

- **Policy level**: UNFF could call upon Governments to provide guidance to the governing bodies of the CPF members, as well as send specific calls to governing bodies, inter alia, to encourage CPF to increase joint programming; and to continue to seek political support, as well as to have regular contacts with non-governmental organizations, private sector entities and other major groups;
- **Operational level**: UNFF could call upon CPF to support its work at three operational levels by: (a) focusing on activities related to specific programme elements of its multi-year programme of work; (b) supporting and facilitating the implementation of specific programmatic components of the UNFF plan of action; and (c) inviting CPF to carry out specific activities and studies on the themes that are under focus in a particular UNFF session, including emerging issues.

20. Overall, UNFF guidance to CPF would be intended to encourage, invite and call upon CPF and its members to undertake various activities in support of the work of UNFF. There are cases where such requests would need to be specifically reiterated in the governing bodies of the CPF member organizations.

C. Suggestions for specific tasks for CPF

21. UNFF might wish to consider inviting CPF to undertake the following tasks in support of UNFF:

(a) Further develop the UNFF plan of action, for adoption by UNFF;

(b) Continue to implement those IPF/IFF proposals for action that were specifically targeted to ITFF, for which the CPF has the main responsibility in respect of implementation;

(c) Assist countries and regions in implementation. UNFF could invite CPF to contribute to the implementation of the UNFF plan of action, and to present, at the second substantive session of UNFF, a concrete and coordinated approach on how to assist in the implementation;

(d) Assist UNFF in monitoring, assessment and reporting on progress towards the attainment of UNFF objectives, for example by:

- Carrying out a survey of the existing forest-related international information and data-collection and reporting systems;
- Undertaking activities towards harmonizing and streamlining national reporting requirements by the CPF member organizations on forest information, taking into account the streamlining work on reporting in other relevant forums;[11]
- Developing a proposal for the UNFF system for monitoring, assessment and reporting, including a proposal for a reporting format and guidelines for reporting on the progress in the implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action according to

the programmatic components of the UNFF plan of action;

- Enhancing common understanding of forest concepts, terms, definitions;
- Reporting to UNFF on CPF's work, in particular on progress in implementing the UNFF plan of action;
- Reporting to UNFF on the state of the world's forests;
- Assisting UNFF in the assessment of the overall progress of the international arrangement on forests;

(e) Provide expertise and advisory services to UNFF, for example, in the form of specific surveys and in-depth analyses enjoying the respect of the scientific community that support policy decision-making.

IV. Conclusions

22. CPF, as a component of the international arrangement on forests, was established in April 2001 at its founding meeting in Rome, to support the work of UNFF. At present, it consists of eight member organizations (ITFF members). It will be strengthened, however, by a few other international forest-related organizations, institutions and instruments. The work of CPF will concentrate on contributing to the development and implementation of the UNFF plan of action, as well as on assisting UNFF in monitoring of progress. CPF will provide further information on its composition and activities at the first substantive session of UNFF.

23. The success of the international arrangement on forests is highly dependent on the support that will be provided by CPF to the work of UNFF, as well as on the support provided by UNFF member countries to CPF. The CPF members are all autonomous bodies with their own governing bodies, decision-making systems, and specific mandates, programmes and resources, which UNFF will need to take into account when providing guidance to CPF.

Notes

[1] See Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/35, para. 7 (b) (iii).

[2] Based on the report of the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IFF) on its fourth session (E/CN.17/2000/14, annex, sect. II.E) entitled "Forest-related work of international and regional organizations and under existing instruments".

[3] See United Nations Environment Programme, *Convention on Biological Diversity* (Environmental Law and Institution Programme Activity Centre), June 1992.

[4] Summary report of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Forests. Meeting held on 11 February 2001 in New York (http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/itffos-sum-feb01.pdf).

[5] See the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Towards the development of the United Nations Forum on Forests plan of action" (E/CN.18/2001/6).

[6] CPF will provide for the first substantive session of UNFF a concept paper on monitoring, assessment and reporting in UNFF.

[7] See the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Multi-year programme of work of the United Nations Forum on Forests" (E/CN.18/2001/5).

[8] See, further, the report of IFF on its fourth session (E/CN.17/2000/14), annex, para. 134.

[9] Ibid., para. 139.

[10] See Economic and Social Council resolution E/2000/35, para. 4 (j).

[11] For example, the work on the streamlining of reporting on multilateral environmental agreements within the Environmental Management Group (EMG), established by the General Assembly at its fifty-third session (resolution 53/242 of 28 July 1999), and chaired by the Executive Director of UNEP.

Annex

Information on the governing bodies of the current members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests

Inter-Agency Task Force on Forests (ITFF)	*Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)*	*Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR)*	*Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat*	*Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)*	*International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO)*	*United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)*	*United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)*	*World Bank*
Main governing body	*Conference of the Parties*	*CIFOR Board of Trustees*	*Economic and Social Council*	*FAO Conference*	*International Tropical Timber Council (ITTC)*	*UNDP Executive Board*[a]	*Governing Council*	*Board of Governors*
Members of governing body	179 States plus the European Community (EC)	14 Board members (three-year term)[b]	54 members (three-year term)	180 States plus EC (three-year term)	56 members, including EC[b]	36 members (three-year term)	58 members (four-year term)	182 members
• **Africa**	Member parties: 52	Members: 3	Members: 14	African nations: 48 Council seats: 12 Near East nations: 21 Council seats: 6 Asian nations: 21 Council seats: 9	Council members Producers: 9 Consumer: 1	Executive Board: 8	Council members: 16	Members: 52
• **Asia and the Pacific**	Member parties: 47	Members: 3	Members: 11	South-west Pacific nations: 13 Council seats: 1	Council members Producers: 10 Consumers: 3	Executive Board: 7	Governing Council members: 13	Members: 49
• **Latin America and the Caribbean**	Member parties: 33	Members: 1	Members: 10	Latin American and Caribbean nations: 33 Council seats: 9	Council members Producers: 11	Executive Board: 5	Governing Council members: 10	Members: 32
• **Western European and other**	Member parties: 25, including EC	Members: 7	Members: 13	North American nations: 2 Council seats: 2	Council members Consumers: 22, including EC	Executive Board: 12	Governing Council members: 13	Members: 26
• **Eastern European**	Member parties: 23	Members: 0	Members: 6	European nations (including Eastern European): 41 Council seats: 10	Council members: 0	Executive Board: 4	Governing Council members: 6	Members: 23

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Frequency of main meetings	Conference of the Parties meets every two years; (six signatory countries have not yet ratified).	Board meets twice per year.	Economic and Social Council holds a five-week substantive session each year, New York/Geneva	FAO Conference meets every two years; decides policies and approves the budget.	ITTC meets twice per year.	Board meets three times per year for a total of up to five weeks, with provision for additional regular meetings.	Meets every two years.	Two meetings per year, held in Washington, D.C., headquarters, to reflect International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank. Every third year, meetings are held in a member country.
Committees; commissions; subsidiary bodies	1. Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice 2. Panel of Experts on Access to Genetic Resources and Benefit-sharing 3. Ad Hoc Open-Ended Working Group on Access to Genetic Resources and Benefit-sharing 4. Ad hoc Open-ended inter-sessional Working Group on	Four committees: • Executive • Program • Finance/ Audit • Nominative	UNFF is one of the 10 functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council	FAO Council (49 member nations) meets three times per year. Acts as the executive organ and exercises power delegated to it by the Conference. Eight FAO Committees • Committee on Forestry is responsible for forests, and reports to the Council	Four committees: • Economic Information/ Market Intelligence • Reforestation and Forest Management • Forest Industry • Finance and Administration		High-level Committee of Ministers and Officials	World Bank policy focus: Forest Policy Review

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Committees; commissions; subsidiary bodies (continued)	Article 8 (j) and related provisions of the Convention 5. Ad hoc technical expert group on forest biological diversity							
Decision-making structure	Consensus in decision-making. Each member has one vote. Majority vote by the members present and voting.	CIFOR is established under the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) system, and has an independent Board of Trustees, which takes decisions by consensus	UNFF reports to the Economic and Social Council and through it to the General Assembly. Decisions are taken by a simple majority of members present and voting. Each member has one vote.	FAO takes one of three roles, to: • Implement its own programme; • Execute a programme on behalf of other agencies and international donors; or • Provide advice and management assistance to national projects.	Decisions and recommendations are based on consensus, or else ITTC takes decisions and makes recommendations by a simple distributed majority vote or, in some cases, a special vote.	Consensus in decision-making. In the case of voting, its rules and procedures, adopted in 1997, would be used.	The Council reports to the General Assembly through the Economic and Social Council. Each member has one vote. Majority required and following the expression "members present and voting".	Member countries are represented by the Board of Governors and a Washington, D.C.-based Board of Directors. Under IBRD[c] articles, to become member of the Bank a country must first join IMF. Membership in IDA,[d] IFC,[e] and MIGA[f] is conditional on membership in IBRD. Members are shareholders with ultimate decision-making power. The Governors, Finance or Planning Ministers meet annually at the fall meeting to decide on key Bank policy issues, admit or suspend country members, decide on changes in the

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Decision-making structure (continued)								authorized capital stock, determine the distribution of IBRD net income, and endorse financial statements and budgets.
Funding mechanism/ decisions on financial matters	Article 21 of the Convention on Biological Diversity provides for a mechanism for financial resources to developing country parties on a concessional or grant basis. Under the "Memorandum of Understanding", the Global Environment Facility (GEF) supports the Convention and the Clearing House Mechanism.	CIFOR's Board of Trustees approves the financial policies. Financial support and funds are based on donor support and derive from CGIAR member voluntary contributions. Funds from the CGIAR system are used to support all 16 international research centres.	Recommendations on financial and budgetary matters are taken by the Economic and Social Council and forwarded to the Fifth Committee of the General Assembly. Sources of funds include: regular budget of the United Nations; trust funds.	Financial policies and budgetary matters are determined by the Conference. Each member nation, upon approval of its application, pays as its first contribution a proportion of the budget, agreed to by the Conference, for the current financial period.	Decisions on financing are taken by simple majority vote. The Committee on Finance and Administration advises ITTC on administrative, budget and funding issues. The Bali Partnership Fund (BPF) fosters investments in sustainable forest products.	Financial resources are derived primarily from voluntary contributions of Governments of participating States. Recipient Governments are expected to pay the local costs of implementing projects in areas under their jurisdiction.	Environment Fund was created on the basis of voluntary contributions. Other sources of funds include: regular budget of the United Nations; trust funds; counterpart contributions.	The bulk of the Governors' power is delegated throughout the year by the Board of Executive Directors. Every member Government is represented by an Executive Director. These 24 Executive Directors meet twice a week to oversee the Bank's business, including approving loans and guarantees, new policies, the administrative budget, country assistance strategies, and borrowing the financial decisions.

[a] Executive Board of UNDP also functions as the Board of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).
[b] No geographical breakdown on the distribution of member seats.
[c] International Bank for Reconstruction and Development.
[d] International Development Association (covers the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative).
[e] International Finance Corporation (emphasizes private sector investments).
[f] Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency.